

Tradition or Truth? (Part 3)

Both the Old and New Testaments are replete with clashes between God's Truth and man-made tradition. Let's look at a passage from each to illustrate the inherent contentions frequently found between the two.

In Isaiah 29:1-16 we find one of the most often cited examples. Religious reformation is occurring under King Hezekiah, but it is outer reformation without genuine (inner) revival. There is plenty of lip service, but no life service. People are going through the motions (v1), but their pride and self trust render a spiritual stupor (v9,10). Acting as "insiders" they are actually "outsiders" - "...far from Me..." - because they listen more to tradition (the voice of man) than Truth (the voice of God) (v13). Taking "the prescriptions of man" (i.e. traditions) and neglecting those from God, they find themselves unable to resist the pathogens of this world only to end up lethargic, insensitive, blind, heartless and without understanding.

In Mark 7:1-13 (see also Matt 15:1-14) we find a head-on collision between man-made systems and heaven-sent Truth. A credentials committee on a fact finding mission from Jerusalem comes to accuse Jesus - the Truth - of violating the "tradition of the elders" (Mk 7:5). Jesus does what Truth always does and turns the tables on them - charging them with violating "the commandment of God" (Mk 7:8). His argument goes like this: 1) You teach your traditions as though they come from God (7:7); 2) You have to neglect what God says to do so (7:8); 3) You must eventually reject Truth altogether to maintain your traditions (7:9). And finally, "You have invalidated ("un+lorded") the Truth and crowned YOUR tradition king!" (7:13) Jesus is plainly exposing their idolatry: "Yahweh is no longer Lord - your tradition is. You are now serving an idol, a counterfeit."

Jesus is ruthless! He doesn't back down, apologize, soften the blow. He even adds fuel to the fire - "You hypocrites - you play actors!" (Mk 7:6) In Matthew's account, after the firestorm, the disciples ask Jesus, "Don't you realize you offended these guys?" (Matt 15:12ff) Jesus goes even deeper by saying, "They are a 'plant' - an enemy has sewn such toxic seeds, not My Father. They try to steal the glory that belongs to God and sap the life out of man. There is no way to walk God's highway of holiness with them as your guides. They can only teach you how to live life in the 'ditches.' In the 'ditches' of self-commendation or self-condemnation, of superiority or inferiority, of darkness or false light. You will never learn to hear the Truth - what my Father says—by preferring the glory of your fellow man over the glory of God (Jo 5:44). Stay away from them - far away from them!"

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👋 **GREETINGS** 👋

After gluing down about 70 shingles in the last 2 years following various storms, we were able to re-shingle the entire roof of our house/ministry center. It looks nice - but more importantly - promises to provide the protection that any dwelling needs to cover and preserve its contents. It is temporary - as are all created things - and does not come with a 100% fail safe guarantee (tornadic winds? hail? fire?)

Such an event prompted me to thank God for His covering and protection. Unlike created things, it cannot be purchased with human currency. Yet since it was paid for by Divine currency, we may - by faith - freely receive such a fail-safe guarantee from our Father. Read the "fine print":

- ...I will never leave you or forsake you (Heb 13:5)
- ...Nothing can sever you from My Love (Ro 8:35ff)
- ...I will cause all things to work for your good (Ro 8:28)
- ...I will receive you into My eternal home (II Cor 5:1-2)
- ...I have a resurrection body waiting for you (I Cor 15:44)
- ...I will finish everything I have begun in you (Phil 1:6)
- ...Trust Me and never be disappointed (I Pet 2:6)

And the list goes on! A forever, never-worry-warranty that in Christ we have all the covering and protection we need - in this world and the one to come!

Thank you Lord, for the covering and protection of a new roof. Thank you Lord, even more so, for the covering and protection that is ours in Christ.

May

5-7	Waymart, PA (607-239-5006)
9	Alachua Study
14,21,28	CCF
19-20	1st Baptist Orlando, FL (863-414-0466)
30	Ocala Study

June

2-4	Louisville, KY (502-245-4581)
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July

28-30	Waldorf, MD (301-751-4408)
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♥ **PRAISE and PRAYER** +

♥ Thanks for God's covering and protection

♥ Thanks for liberating Truth

✚ Wisdom for discerning between the man-made and the God-given

✚ Healing for those of us affected by toxic traditions